

**TITLE**

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**JOURNAL**

The International Journal of the History of Sport

**DATE DEPOSITED**

26 February 2018

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## **Football, Place and Community in a New Zealand Mining Town, 1877-1939**

### Introduction

Resource communities (such as lumber camps, power plants, and mining towns) are by their very nature peripheral. They frequently exist in a space of isolation, not only geographically but also culturally as well. The New Zealand coal mining town of Kaitangata is a classic example of this process – an industrial, working class, and heavily immigrant community positioned within an otherwise agricultural, conservation and homogenous tract of rural New Zealand. Kaitangata, in the words of one writer, ‘possessed a unique character and pattern of social interaction’ that marked it out from its immediate environment.<sup>1</sup>

Kaitangata almost perfectly fits Colin Howell and Daryl Leeworthy’s notion of the ‘Industrial Frontier’, particularly as a region ‘often regarded as “peripheral” to the nation-building epic’. Based on their analysis of coalmining communities in South Wales and Cape Breton Island, Howell and Leeworthy noted the

‘connections between working-class consciousness, community identities and sporting culture in the early stages of industrial capitalist development on both sides of the Atlantic. ... In a sense they were frontier communities shaped by the influx of migrants who crossed both regional and national boundaries – and borderland regions that fashioned identities out of imported sporting traditions ... that they put to their own purposes. Neither region perceived their lot simply in relation to metropolitan centres, nor did they consider themselves cultural backwaters or genuflect to the modernist hype. Instead, the formation of local identities and local rivalries were key to the dynamic relations of both coalfields.’<sup>2</sup>

As in the mining communities studied by Howell and Leeworthy, Kaitangata manifested its differences from its neighbouring communities through its choice of sporting activities. In a part of the world where rugby union held absolute hegemony, the town broke the mould by also fielding teams in association football, rugby league and even Australian Rules football (distinguishing itself as the only town outside of the provincial capital of Dunedin where these three sports obtained a foothold). That a town of little more than 1600 people could field strong teams in up to three football codes at the same time also speaks of a culture of masculinity that is embodied amongst mining communities worldwide. This paper analyzes how these sporting activities contributed to a unique sense of space, addressing themes including class, ethnicity, and identity.

### Kaitangata, Coal And Community

The setting for this case study is the town of Kaitangata, located in the province of Otago on the South Island of New Zealand. The town is situated within the sub-region of South Otago, and is located approximately 80 kilometres south of the province's principle city of Dunedin. Kaitangata is nowadays a small town, even by New Zealand standards, and recently received some international prominence when it launched a global search for new migrants in an effort to boost its dwindling population.<sup>3</sup>

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, Kaitangata was a thriving settlement. Its population of 1721 in 1921 marked it out as one of the larger provincial towns in Otago. Kaitangata had been proclaimed as a Borough in 1887, and in 1905 proclaimed itself the 'centre of a district full of interest on account of its scenery and industrial enterprise'. It was home to five churches, two hotels, an Athenaeum, and a public hall.<sup>4</sup>

Kaitangata's *raison d'être* was coal, which was first discovered near the town in 1844. The first significant mines opened in late 1860s, and by 1880 they were producing a third of Otago's coal needs and employing 100 men. By 1901 the Kaitangata and Castle Hill pits produced 112,455 tonnes of coal, almost twelve per cent of the country's total production, and employed 308 men. Twenty years later, production had almost quadrupled and the local pits employed 405 men, one tenth of the country's miners.<sup>5</sup>

As was noted earlier, coal-mining towns (like other resource communities) are by their very nature peripheral. This was certainly the case in New Zealand. Len Richardson noted that 'the remoteness, both geographical and industrial, of the pioneering heartlands of the coal industry was undeniable. Whether they lived in established coaltowns or in the satellite camps perched precariously on bush-clad slopes, the miners of colonial New Zealand inhabited a world of their own'. Similarly, Matthew Wright argues that 'coal miners in New Zealand's colonial era, and for much of the twentieth century, were in many ways a breed apart. Most miners and their families lived away from wider society in semi-isolated coal communities some distance from the main centres.'<sup>6</sup>

This isolation was not only physical, but also equally cultural. Coal miners were very different from their rural neighbours. Matthew Wright has spoken of miners possessing 'a sense of cultural separation from wider New Zealand', and *Te Ara* describes how 'isolation, physical hardship, poor housing and the British origins of many miners bred a distinctive culture.'<sup>7</sup>

In the case of Kaitangata, this cultural difference was magnified by its physical location. Unlike most other coal-mining regions globally, such as the north of England or Germany's Ruhr valley, or the Buller and Waikato fields of New

Zealand, Kaitangata was not part of a wider mining region. Instead, it was literally a town apart. Although there were 163 coal mines in Otago in 1896, most were small operations with less than twenty workers, with the smallest being tiny owner-operated operations.<sup>8</sup>

Kaitangata's neighbours were not fellow miners, but farmers, agricultural workers and mill-hands. As Richardson notes, the town was 'set in a rural economy based on sheep, dairy and wheat farming'. Its largest neighbours were Balclutha and Milton. Balclutha, 12 kilometres away, was a rural service centre and home to a large stockyard and freezing works (abattoir). Milton, slightly more distant, was home to the Bruce Woollen Mill (which employed 350 hands at its peak).<sup>9</sup>

In this world, Kaitangata was a town apart - an industrial, working class, and heavily migrant community positioned within an otherwise agricultural, conservation and homogenous tract of rural New Zealand. As Richardson notes, 'Kaitangata in 1880 clearly exhibited many of the features which came to be associated with mining communities generally: it was a closed community of recently arrived British colliers bound together by ties of kinship, nationality and occupation.'<sup>10</sup> One way in which Kaitangata manifested this difference was in sport.

### Football in Kaitangata

The first record of football being played in Kaitangata comes from 1877. The Clutha club, from the neighbouring town of Balclutha, visited Kaitangata on Good Friday and played a match under rugby rules. Although having only been in existence for two months, the Kaitangata team saw off the visitors. Clutha turned the tables in the return match a few weeks later, and the Kaitangata club closed their season with a visit from the Union club from Dunedin.<sup>11</sup>

That the town's first footballing encounters were in the rugby code is not surprising, as New Zealand sport (and in many ways New Zealand society as a whole) is dominated by rugby union. The success of the New Zealand national team, the All Blacks, become a vital component of the country's national identity throughout the twentieth century, and rugby has been celebrated as the defining feature of masculine identity in the country.<sup>12</sup>

Not only was rugby union New Zealand's national sport, but a myth developed that the code was particularly linked to rural New Zealand. Most notably, the success of the national team was often attributed to the contribution of farmers like Colin Meads and Brian Lahore.<sup>13</sup> This fitted with wider conceptions about the importance of the countryside, and especially about perceived rural values,

in New Zealand identity. Jock Phillips, for instance, has argued that 'the heart of the male culture, then, was not found in the cities but in the rural and frontier regions of New Zealand.'<sup>14</sup>

Whether this image of rural rugby ever had any basis in reality has been strongly challenged. Most notably, Greg Ryan has persuasively debunked many of the accepted myths of New Zealand rugby. Most importantly, he has clinically demonstrated that, far from being dominated by farmers and other products of rural New Zealand, the national team actually saw an overrepresentation of city players, middle-class professionals and the University educated.<sup>15</sup>

Ryan also notes that many studies have failed to distinguish between initial enthusiasm for rugby in country towns and sustained interest in it. He argues that many historians have been guilty of noting the establishment of a club in a new town as evidence of the strength of rugby, but failing to follow up and assess the continuing fortunes of the club. In many cases these clubs subsequently struggled, suffering from player shortages, sporadic fixture lists or even folding completely.<sup>16</sup>

This point is certainly true in the case of Kaitangata, where both the local club and the South Otago Sub-Union itself went through lean patches, with the Kaitangata rugby club going into abeyance in the late 1880s, once more in 1903, and again in 1911 (just two years after winning its first South Otago premiership – reflecting just how precarious a club's fortunes could be). Moreover, many clubs remained affiliated to their provincial rugby union, but existed in name only or played just a handful of matches each season. In 1926 the Otago Rugby Football Union's (ORFU) *Annual* recorded 52 clubs based in rural Otago, although an analysis of match reports and league tables suggests that only 31 of these played a full season in an established competition.<sup>17</sup>

Whilst Ryan's point that the importance of country regions to New Zealand rugby has been vastly over-emphasized is valid, it is also important to note that the dominance of the rugby code in rural New Zealand has much stronger historical basis. Whilst individual rugby clubs might have waxed and waned in their fortunes, their struggles were very rarely due to being challenged by other codes of football. As this paper will show, with the specific exception of coal mining communities, rugby union was literally the 'only game in town' in rural New Zealand.

Kaitangata was one of the rare exceptions to this pattern. Association football arrived in the town in 1889 when a local club was formed and the Sawyers Bay club from Dunedin journeyed to the town. The local team won by two goals to nil in a match dubbed by a local newspaper as 'the most exciting and best-contested

game of football that has been played at Kaitangata for some time' and that 'at the close of the game it was unanimously asserted both by onlookers and players that [compared to rugby union, association football] was the most interesting, less dangerous and most harmonious of the two sets of rules'.<sup>18</sup>

The club next tested themselves in a home and away series against a Dunedin representative XI, splitting the series. The rudimentary state of the game was illustrated when the visiting Dunedin captain presented the club with a soccer ball, the locals not having had one of their own up to that point. Three matches were played the following season. The club's early highpoint came in 1891, when it went undefeated in its four matches, defeating two Dunedin club sides (Northern and Roslyn) and drawing one and winning the other of two matches against a Dunedin representative side. This success was a source of great local pride, with the Kaitangata Mutual Improvement Society proudly proclaiming that 'they could now boast of the champion association football team of Otago'.<sup>19</sup>

This momentum was not followed up on, with no matches being played against City clubs during the next two seasons, leading to the players drifting back to rugby union. In 1896 a new club was officially constituted and sought affiliation with the Otago Football Association (OFA), although a lack of opponents anywhere in South Otago meant that the club still remained reliant on occasional matches against Dunedin-based clubs. These proved to be few and far between, with Dunedin clubs being reluctant to travel to the town – the club played only three matches in each of 1896 and 1897, and none at all in 1898 and 1899.<sup>20</sup>

The sport moved towards a more established footing in 1900, when a newly re-constituted Kaitangata club was established and again gained affiliation to the OFA. A number of matches were played against Dunedin clubs that year, and two Kaitangata-based players were selected in that season's Otago representative side. Matches against Dunedin clubs became more frequent, although the club was still not involved in any organized competition.<sup>21</sup>

In 1903 the club took the plunge and committed to playing in the Dunedin competition on a weekly basis. It thus became the seventh club in the league, necessitating fortnightly trips to Dunedin where all of the six other clubs were based. The team met with immediate success, finishing the season as runners-up in their league. Kaitangata were to be a force in Otago soccer for the next twenty years, winning the premiership in 1905, 1913 and 1920, and finishing as runners-up on a further five occasions.<sup>22</sup>

The strength of soccer in the town lay not only with in its senior team. The sport was played in the local school and amongst boy scouts. There was also a local competition, the Carson Cup, which was contested between the town's mines.

The Cup was donated by Matthew Carson, a local merchant, in April 1901, and was initially contested by the Kaitangata and Castle Hill mines. Soccer reached its peak in the town in the early 1920s. As well as success for the Kaitangata club in this era, up to four local teams were competing in the Carson Cup. One of these teams, Mt. Zion, also entered the Dunedin competition for three seasons (1921-1923), giving the town two representatives in the premier competition.<sup>23</sup>

Kaitangata's soccer and rugby team were quite evenly matched in terms of popularity, although the soccer team and its supporters were disadvantaged by having to travel to Dunedin every fortnight. The reason for this was simple, Kaitangata was the only soccer team in rural Otago. Indeed, when the club was established in 1889 it professed to be the 'first country club formed in New Zealand'. Whilst the local rugby union club could fill its schedule with matches against local rivals from Milton, Balclutha and other surrounding towns, competing in Dunedin provided the only option available to the soccer team. As this paper will show, competing in the Dunedin competition revealed not only the town's geographic isolation from the provincial capital, but more pertinently the wider cultural divisions between the two.<sup>24</sup>

The club and the code did not shirk from trying to develop the sport in country districts. After the Kaitangata club's first match in 1889 it was suggested that efforts were being made to form clubs in Stirling, Balclutha and Lawrence. The following year the Clutha rugby club from Balclutha played against Kaitangata under soccer rules, although the return fixture later that season reverted to rugby rules and none of the other efforts proved forthcoming. In an effort to find more local opposition, the distinction between the codes was sometimes blurred. In July 1891 the Kaitangata school played Balclutha school, the first half under Association rules and the second under Rugby rules, and the following year the senior team played a similar match against neighbouring Stirling.<sup>25</sup>

Efforts to spread soccer continued after the dawn of the new century. Balclutha was a particular target, with numerous efforts being made to establish the code in this town. However, aside from one match between Kaitangata and Balclutha schools in 1902 and a contest between Kaitangata seconds and a fledgling Clutha Rovers club in Balclutha in 1921 (of whom no more was ever heard), these efforts proved fruitless.<sup>26</sup> The early 1910s saw some hopes of progress, with Kaitangata playing matches against Milton in 1911 and the nearby town of Benhar (which was centred around a large ceramics factory) the following year. These games raised hopes that the sport might take off locally, and the establishment of a South Otago Football Association was mooted, but again nothing more eventuated.<sup>27</sup> On only one occasion was a regional team able to undertake a full season's play, with a Milton team competing in the Dunedin

Third Grade competition in 1905, but even that minor success could not be sustained for more than one season.<sup>28</sup>

These rare exceptions only served to prove the rule that rural New Zealand was the preserve of rugby union. That none of the other towns in the province were able to sustain a soccer team highlights the hegemony of the oval-ball code. From 1899 until 1921, Kaitangata was the only association football club in rural Otago. Even when the province's second country-based club, Seacliff, was formed in 1921, that club was hardly representative of a traditional rural community. The Seacliff club was formed from staff and attendants employed at the province's psychiatric hospital, with reports suggesting that the hospital's Superintendent, Alexander McKillop, deliberated hired staff based on their footballing prowess. The club was a mainstay of the Dunedin competition throughout the 1920s and 1930s and was the inaugural winner of the Chatham Cup (the national knock-out club competition) in 1923. Association football had already been established at the Porirua (Wellington) and Sunnyside (Christchurch) Mental Hospitals for a number of years [both of these clubs would also emulate Seacliff in winning the Chatham Cup during its early years], and the sport formed part of the unique cultural traditions within these institutions. It was, however, a culture that was not representative of wider rural society.<sup>29</sup>

This pattern was not confined to Otago, and soccer remained an almost exclusively urban sport throughout the rest of New Zealand. Although the sport had been played in some rural communities in the 1860s and 1870s, when the association, rugby and Australian codes of football (and variants thereof) were all challenging each other for supremacy, the eventual ascendancy of rugby union as the dominant code saw the game almost wiped out.<sup>30</sup> The sport re-emerged in the 1890s, but was mostly confined to the four main centres – Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury, Dunedin, before spreading to larger provincial cities such as Invercargill, Napier, New Plymouth and Wanganui. In this 1900s, aside from Kaitangata, the only non-Metropolitan teams were Huntly from the Waikato (which played in the Auckland competition) and Nightcaps in Southland (who played in Invercargill). These clubs also had a good measure of success, with the Nightcaps club winning seven of the first nine Southland championships.<sup>31</sup> These two centres shared something else with Kaitangata, besides their footballing preferences. Both were also coal-mining towns.

The links between soccer and coal mining strengthened throughout the 1910s and 1920s. The West Coast of the South Island was New Zealand's premier coal-mining district until after the First World War, although soccer initially appears to have had a rather fitful existence on the Buller and Westland fields. The Buller FA was affiliated to the New Zealand Football Association (NZFA) in 1894, but ceased to exist a few years later. Clubs were formed in various mines over the



intervening years, but it was not until 1912 that the Westland Football Association affiliated to the NZFA (with Buller following in 1914). However, the outbreak of the First World War meant that both regions went into abeyance shortly thereafter.<sup>32</sup>

The sport bounced back in the 1920s. Buller re-affiliated to the NZFA in 1923, with five clubs, whilst Westland now boasted nine (centred around the mining towns of Blackball, Dobson, Runanga, and Rewanui). Westland's representative team were defeated 2-1 by the Australian national team in 1924, but in 1927 they were the only New Zealand provincial team to defeat the touring Canadian national team. In Buller, the mining towns of Stockton, Denniston and Millerton (which fielded up to six clubs throughout the 1930s) provided the backbone of the Association, with the Millerton All Blacks reaching the final of the Chatham Cup in 1932 and 1933.<sup>33</sup>

Similar patterns emerged on the North Island Coalfields. A club was formed in Hikurangi, the country's northern-most coal producing region, in 1913, and it played a key role in the establishment of soccer in the Whangarei district. The town remained a stronghold of the sport throughout the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>34</sup> In the Waikato, the Huntly club (which was forced to play in the Auckland competition because of the lack of local rivals) spearheaded abortive attempts to establish a South Auckland<sup>35</sup> Association in 1910 and 1921. A local association was finally established in 1923, which coincided with the massive expansion of coal mining in the Waikato during and after the First World War. The new association was dominated by clubs from Huntly and the newly established mining towns of Rotowaro, Pukemiro and Glen Massey rather than the provincial capital of Hamilton.<sup>36</sup>

The ties between coal mining and association football in New Zealand were thus extremely close. Of the sixteen largest coal mines in New Zealand in 1921 (which employed more than three-quarters of the country's miners), all had some association with soccer.<sup>37</sup> Outside of the main cities, soccer was almost exclusively confined to these mining communities, and made virtually no penetration into other rural settlements.

This also reflects the degree to which coal-mining communities were unique, and stood aside from the rest of rural New Zealand. The sense of cultural isolation from the rural mainstream is particularly acute. It also speaks of shared cultural bonds between the nation's mining communities. Although geographically isolated from each other, they, in the words of Wright 'felt closer ties to each other than to their immediate local communities'.<sup>38</sup>

These ties were increased by frequent migration between different towns and coalfields, as miners sought continued employment within the industry. Richardson notes that this trend had been apparent since 1880s, and continued throughout the early twentieth century. This trend also impacted on sport, with players often moving between different towns and fields. In 1927, for instance, three rugby league playing brothers from Kaitangata moved to Blackball in Westland after the closure of one of Kaitangata's pits.<sup>39</sup>

It was the coal industry that gave rise to association football in Kaitangata, and it would also be the reason for its demise. In late 1926 the Number One Mine at Kaitangata closed, leading to the redundancy of 83 men. This plunged the town into an economic depression and had a major effect on all of the town's football teams. The soccer team, who were the province's reigning champions, lost key players and were unable to guarantee they could field a team, leading the OFA to withdraw them from its First Grade competition. Although the club made a late application to re-join the Dunedin competition, the season had already started and their application was rejected. The rugby league club was later forced to withdraw from its competition mid-season because the closure had forced many of the players to seek work away from the district. The Crescent rugby union club had similar problems and was unable to enter a senior team in the 1927 South Otago competition, fielding only a second grade and junior (third grade) team.<sup>40</sup>

The mine eventually reopened later in 1927 but the effect of the crisis on the population, and the town's sporting clubs, took some time to settle. The town's rugby club returned to the local first grade competition in 1928, although it was not until 1929 that the rugby league team were able to return to play. By contrast, the association football club did not resume activities until 1933. This long delay appears to have stemmed not from player unavailability, but because of lingering anger at the OFA's refusal to grant the club late re-affiliation in 1927. That decision had certainly been unpopular in the town, resulting in an unsuccessful protest to the NZFA, and there were suggestions that the decision would lead the players to 'go over to another code'. When the club finally returned to the Dunedin competition in 1933 it was but a shell of its former self, and finished last in the table. It did not return to competition the following year, ending the town's more than forty-year history of participation in the sport.<sup>41</sup>

### Another Sporting Periphery: Rugby League

Kaitangata's football exceptionalism was not confined to soccer. The sport of rugby league came to Otago in 1924, when a test match between New Zealand and Great Britain was played in Dunedin and a local competition was established.<sup>42</sup> Kaitangata showed an immediate interest in the new code, with

600 residents demanding that the railways department run a special train to the test match. On 26 September 1924 a public meeting was held in the town, attracting around 80 people. At the meeting it was decided to form the Kaitangata Rugby League Club and a provisional committee was elected to undertake the organisation.<sup>43</sup>

The club went on to be an enthusiastic participant in the new code, playing in the Dunedin competition during the 1925 and 1926 seasons. As was noted earlier, the club was forced to withdraw mid-way through the 1927 season due to the closure of the town's mine and the subsequent economic problems. It returned to the competition in 1929, and in 1930 it was one of the leading two clubs in the league. That proved to be its last hurrah, however, and the following year it was excluded from the competition (for reasons that will be discussed later in this paper), and it never returned before the League's own demise at the end of the 1934 season.<sup>44</sup>

As in association football, the Kaitangata club would prove to be rugby league's only outpost in rural Otago. This was not due to any lack of desire by the code's administrators. In 1924 the organisers of rugby league announced that they hoped to establish the new code in Balclutha, Clinton and Oamaru, but nothing came of these endeavours. Meetings were held in Port Chalmers and Mosgiel (both satellite towns, a port and a mill town respectively, on the fringes of Dunedin), but other than one practice match in Port Chalmers, neither of these initiatives were successful.<sup>45</sup>

In late 1926 the Otago Rugby Football League (ORFL) made its most concerted effort to promote the game outside of Dunedin. Hoping to capitalize on the foothold that it had already established in Kaitangata, the League identified South Otago as having the greatest potential for expansion, and sought to establish clubs in both Balclutha and Milton. Exhibition matches were staged in both towns, followed by public meetings, and financial support was provided to launch new clubs. Neither effort was successful, however, and this proved to be the last attempt to establish the code in rural Otago.<sup>46</sup>

Rugby League's inability to form a club in Milton at that time is particularly telling, as many locals were extremely upset with the local rugby authorities. The local rugby club, Toko, had become very dissatisfied with the South Otago Rugby Sub-Union (SORSU) and early in 1926 had even considered withdrawing from it and entering the Dunedin competition. The conflict boiled over in 1926 in a dispute over a referee's decision in a senior match between Toko and Owaka, with the SORSU demanding that the match, which Toko had won, be replayed. When Toko refused the sub-union awarded the senior banner to Owaka. The ORFL saw the dispute as an opportunity to expand its influence, but despite

seemingly fertile group, they gained no traction.<sup>47</sup> Milton's rejection of rugby league reinforced just how strong the hegemony of rugby union was in rural New Zealand. As such, it also highlights just how unique Kaitangata's embrace of both association football and rugby league was.

Again, this situation was reflective of the wider situation across New Zealand. Rugby league, like soccer, was almost exclusively urban before the Second World War. The only exceptions to this trend were on the West Coast and in rural Waikato, again both coalfield communities. The code was established on the West Coast in 1915 and it remains one of the few regions of New Zealand where the league code actually challenged rugby union for supremacy. Despite its low population the 'Coast' has produced more than fifty Kiwis (New Zealand rugby league internationals). Recently the strength of West Coast rugby league has declined, in tandem with the downturn in the region's mining industry.<sup>48</sup>

### Explaining the Sporting Preferences of Mining Communities

How can Kaitangata's sporting exceptionalism, serving as a lonely bastion of the association and rugby league codes in otherwise rugby-union dominated rural Otago, be explained? Undoubtedly, Kaitangata's key point of difference from its rural neighbours – coal mining – is a vital factor. However, what specifically was it about coal mining that impacted upon these sporting preferences? The key point of difference that separated New Zealand's coal-mining communities from the rest of the country was demographic, with the bulk of the country's miners being British-born.

In the specific case of Kaitangata, Tony Bamford notes that migrants, predominantly from Scotland, Lancashire and Yorkshire, populated the town.<sup>49</sup> The 1921 census records that, out of Kaitangata's 906 male residents, 112 were English-born (12%), 128 Scots-born (14%), whilst 607 were born in NZ (66%). These figures included 373 boys under the age of twenty, the vast majority of whom would have been locally-born. Although not immediately striking, these figures showed a marked difference from the national figures, which revealed that nationally only 6.5% of the male population were English-born and 4% Scots-born, compared to 72% born in the Dominion. Even in Dunedin, widely referred to as the 'Edinburgh of the South', only 9% of the population were Scots-born.<sup>50</sup>

It is also clear that the bulk of Kaitangata's British-born population were employed in the mines. Richardson examined the origins of the 34 miners who died in an 1879 explosion in the Kaitangata Coal Mining Company's main pit. 32 of the fatalities were British-born, more than half of whom had been living in

New Zealand for less than three years (including eight who had migrated less than six weeks before the fatal accident).<sup>51</sup>

Frustratingly, there is no definitive data available about the origins of the football club's players.<sup>52</sup> There is, however, strong evidence to suggest ties to British-born players, and Scots in particular. At the Annual General Meeting of the Kaitangata club in 1892, the captain, G. Raynes, spoke of 'this good old Scottish Game'. Match reports, like one in the *Bruce Herald* from 1897, similarly referred to 'this favourite Scottish pastime', and, when the club reformed in 1900, it was reported they would be playing under the 'Scottish Association' rules. The town's jubilee history also recorded that the local soccer club recorded a jump in membership when Scottish immigration into the township peaked.<sup>53</sup>

Newspaper reports of soccer matches in New Zealand's other mining communities (especially on the West Coast) made more explicit reference to the origins of the participants. When a football team was established in Blackball in Westland in 1902 it claimed to possess 'two Edinburgh University players, a Sunderland League player, a Queen's Park (Glasgow) international, and a Wolverhampton Wanderer'. When Blackball and Runanga met in a charity match in 1914 it was noted that 'both teams are composed of players who learned the game in the Old Country'. Nine years later, a newspaper claimed 'Westland is one of the Dominion strongholds of Association Football, the mining 'new chums' mainly coming from districts at Home where they play not [sic] rugby'. That same year, the Huntly team that won the Waikato competition were described as 'Home men [who] know the game right through.'<sup>54</sup>

The links between British migration and the popularity of soccer have been further emphasized in histories of New Zealand's other coal mining regions. The official history of the Southland Football Association noted that the province's earliest club, Hokonui Rangers, comprised 'mine workers – mostly from the Old Country'. A history of the Nightcaps district in Southland claimed that 'in the early 1900s emigrants from coal mining areas in Great Britain came to settle in the Nightcaps area, bringing with them their love of soccer and teaching others to play it as well'.<sup>55</sup> Similar claims are made in local histories of Millerton and Stockton on the West Coast, which note that 'soccer had always been strong at Millerton, mainly as a result of the strong Scottish influence amongst the miners'.<sup>56</sup>

Similar patterns could be observed across the Tasman in Australia, where association football was closely linked with the Scottish coal-mining diaspora. Philip Mosely notes that 'when British immigrants arrived in [New South Wales] it was natural that a fanaticism for soccer would arrive with them. It was as much a part of their luggage and baggage as their clothes'. Nowhere was this

more apparent than on the coalfields of the Hunter Valley, which became Australian soccer's strongest non-metropolitan foothold. The first club to be formed in the area were Minmi Rangers in 1884, whose five founding members were all Scots, and subsequent clubs were equally dominated by British-born players. Comparable links could also be found on the Illawarra and Wonthaggi (Victoria) coalfields, which also became strong regional soccer centres, and which were both centres of Scottish immigration.<sup>57</sup>

Although contributing to Kaitangata's place on the periphery of its local sporting culture, these links also placed Kaitangata very much within the 'mainstream' of New Zealand's soccer history, given that soccer in New Zealand has been heavily associated with British migrants, especially the Scots. In the early twentieth century, almost every town that played the sport had a club named 'Thistle', whilst others bore names such as Scottish Wanderers and Auckland Caledonians. The 1934 Chatham Cup final [the national knock-out cup] memorably featured two teams with the same name, with Thistle of Auckland meeting their Christchurch namesakes.<sup>58</sup>

The large number of British-born players within the sport remained a constant throughout the twentieth century. When New Zealand qualified for the 1982 FIFA World Cup finals (by far the greatest moment in the history of the code in New Zealand), over half of the 22-man squad were British-born. By contrast, only 23 of the 1133 players (less than two percent) to represent the All Blacks rugby team throughout their entire history<sup>59</sup> were born in Britain. Detractors of soccer within New Zealand would often cite the fact that it was a 'sport for Pommies' as a key reason for their disdain for the sport, and it certainly played in part in soccer being pushed to the periphery of New Zealand sporting culture.<sup>60</sup>

This marginalization reflected New Zealand society's wider, and complicated, relationship with Britain and British-culture. Despite that fact that almost the entirety of the non-Maori population (who made up over 94% of the country's total population in 1896) were derived from British stock, and notwithstanding the strong ties of Empire, there was a strong antipathy to overt manifestations of Britishness. As Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn note 'Colonial culture was not very sympathetic to newcomers who showed their Old World roots too strongly. There was a stock distinction to be made between the "new chums" and the old. ... From ribbing by colonials through to jibes about "homies" or "poms" in the twentieth century, some New Zealanders made the perpetuation of Old World customs a source of at best joking and at worst outright hostility.'<sup>61</sup>

Seen in this light, choosing to play soccer, rather than the 'Colonial' sport of rugby union, reflected more than just a sporting preference. Although there is no evidence to suggest that this choice was intended as a deliberate articulation of

difference by the miners, sport became a reflection of cultural and ethnic persistence on the coalfields. The consequences of these sporting choices, particularly in the strained relations between Kaitangata and teams from Dunedin that are detailed later in this paper, also serve to emphasize Howell and Leeworthy's observation that the 'development of a separate sphere of culture, identity and society ... reflected the industrial character of the [coalfield towns] as well as their separation from the metropolis'.<sup>62</sup>

It was not only in soccer that immigration explained Kaitangata's sporting preferences. Even before the establishment of the rugby league club in 1924, the town was home to residents who had played that sport in their native Northern England<sup>63</sup>. However, given the isolation of Kaitangata from other rugby league playing areas of New Zealand it was not feasible to play the game in the town until suitable local competition was available, which only arrived when the game began to be played in Dunedin. Thus, when A. Asquith arrived in the town in 1908 he was forced to seek membership of the rugby union club. The club sought permission from the ORFU 'to play [this] recent arrival from England, where he had played under the Northern Union rules', but this was turned down on the grounds that all rugby league players was deemed to be professionals and thus banned from the staunchly amateur union code.<sup>64</sup>

When rugby league became established in Otago in the 1920s, this latent demand could be fulfilled, explaining the town's eager establishment of a new club. Amongst its first players was Peter Prescott, who had played rugby league in his native Lancashire before migrating to New Zealand. Before arriving in Kaitangata he had lived in other New Zealand coal-mining centres where he again played the game. When he arrived in Kaitangata there was no established league competition, so he played soccer. When rugby league was established in Dunedin, however, he saw the opportunity to form a club in Kaitangata. He was selected to play in the first Otago representative team, helped found the Kaitangata club and coached the team.<sup>65</sup>

The impact of immigration on Kaitangata's unique sporting culture is further emphasized by an examination of the town's short-lived Australian Rules football club. The Australian code had been played in New Zealand from the 1860s to the 1880s, but it had virtually died out as rugby became the dominant football code. The sport made a comeback in the 1900s, however, as the dominant pattern in trans-Tasman migration took a turn, and large numbers of Australians moved to NZ.<sup>66</sup>

Kaitangata was at the forefront this trend, with the Kaitangata Wanderers club being formed in 1903. The club played two matches the following year against the Australian Pioneer club of Dunedin. Again, these sporting developments

reflected the demographics of the town. Bamford noted that in 1901 there were only 44 Australians living in Kaitangata, but that at the next census, in 1906, there were 122, and that most of this population was made up of males aged from 17 to 67. Knowing this we can see that the 'rules' club was a further example of a migrant community wishing to continue its traditional sport in its new environment.<sup>67</sup>

### Expanding the Periphery

Although its choice of football codes may have left Kaitangata on the periphery of the South Otago sporting scene, it also needs to be added that it was in many ways equally, if not more, peripheral to the Dunedin clubs that it competed against. One obvious issue was distance; Dunedin was not close – 80 kilometres by road or rail. Having to undertake this fortnightly journey during the football season was no small undertaking. Nor was transport cheap for the miners, with the football club having to undertake extensive fundraising in order to compete.<sup>68</sup> An added complication was that coal demand was, naturally, at its highest during the winter months meaning that the demand for labour was at its highest during the football season, and some players had difficulty getting time off work to travel to away games in Dunedin.<sup>69</sup>

Nor was it easy for Dunedin-based clubs to travel to Kaitangata. The 1930 rugby league season provides an anecdote about some of the challenges faced in travelling to the southern outpost. The Pacific club had to travel down to play a match but their bus broke down at Henley. A second bus arrived from Dunedin to continue the journey, but that only got as far as Milton before it too broke down, and the team had to sit on the back of a truck for the final part of their journey. They only arrived in Kaitangata at 4 o'clock, but the game still went ahead, with Pacific earning a creditable draw.<sup>70</sup>

At least the Pacific club made it to their destination. A much more serious complaint across all of the codes was that many Dunedin clubs did not fulfil their away fixtures in Kaitangata. As early as 1898 the OFA expressed its regret that it could not persuade more Dunedin-based clubs to visit Kaitangata. This appears to have been a remained a persistent problem in association football even after the Kaitangata club had formally joined the Dunedin competition, with up to half of the city clubs failing to travel south for their scheduled matches in some seasons. So frequently did this occur that in 1908 the Kaitangata soccer club withdrew from the Dunedin competition season in protest over the issue. The club's protest lasted only one season, but the problem of forfeits by visiting teams would continue well into the 1920s.<sup>71</sup>



Kaitangata also faced complications in rugby league. In 1931 the ORFL declined Kaitangata's application to compete in the Dunedin competition. The justification for the league's action was that they wanted to eliminate having a bye, which would have been the consequence of five clubs competing. This may have been the official explanation but it seems more likely that an increasingly cost-conscious ORFL found the expense of travel to the town, which cost it over one hundred pounds in 1930, an excessive strain on its budget.<sup>72</sup>

Kaitangata was not alone amongst New Zealand's coal mining towns in facing this problem. Nightcaps were essentially forced out of the Southland Football Association (and thus, by extension, from competing in the sport of soccer itself) when the Invercargill clubs grew sick of travelling to away matches. Despite Nightcaps being largely responsible for the establishment of soccer in Southland, and the reigning champions, the Invercargill clubs complained in 1912 about the 'serious inconvenience' of having to undertake the train journey to the town. Even when the Nightcaps club argued that each Invercargill only had to make one such journey each season, whereas they had to make nine or ten trips to Invercargill to fulfil their own away fixtures [adding that they always fulfilled their away fixtures, which were not always reciprocated by the city clubs], they received little sympathy from their city-based rivals.<sup>73</sup>

Mere distance alone, however, may not have been the only reason for the reluctance of city clubs to compete with their coal-mining rivals. A detailed reading of press reports hints at more serious underlying tensions, reflecting a clash of cultures between the miners and the city-based players. As early as 1904, the Kaitangata Wanderers Victorian Rules football club bemoaned the 'discourteous manner in which the Kaitangata team has been treated by Dunedin'.<sup>74</sup>

More usually, however, it was the city clubs (backed by the metropolitan-based press) that bemoaned the behaviour of their rural rivals, and there were regular complaints about the conduct of the Kaitangata players and crowds. Sendings-off seemed to be a regular feature of the soccer club's matches, with violent play, foul language and dissent being the regular reasons. Most notoriously, three players were dismissed during a single match in 1904. A match report of a loss of the Christian Brothers club in 1914 labelled the Kaitangata players as 'sore losers', who 'resorted to the stupid, hoary pretext of blaming the referee, offering him insults, and publically showing contempt for his authority', noting that it was 'the second occasion upon which Kaitangata people have had to blush for the behaviour of representatives to whom were entrusted the honour of their district'.<sup>75</sup>

Other reports, however, implied that the Kaitangata supporters themselves were just as likely to transgress as their players. One reporter delicately opined that 'it has sometimes been said that some of the Kaitangata spectators are prone to allow their impulsiveness to outmeasure their discretion'. In 1903 a local correspondent claimed that the failings of the Dunedin referee led the Kaitangata spectators to '[give] vent to their feeling in a way more expressive than dignified', and the following season one Kaitangata supporter was barred by the OFA from attending any matches. Three years later, a disciplinary committee meeting of the OFA heard from one referee that he would no longer officiate in any match at Kaitangata, amid allegations that spectators used 'filthy language' and had 'acted in a very disorderly manner, jeering at the referee and the players of the Northern team, using bad language, and taking charge of the line umpire, who was influenced by them.'<sup>76</sup> Similarly in Southland in 1912 (perhaps notably, the year in which Nightcaps were essentially removed from the local competition), it was alleged that the coal town's supporters had 'interfered' with members of the visiting Rangers team after a local player had been red-carded for striking a Rangers player.<sup>77</sup>

In Otago, both of these issues came to a head in late 1909, when the City club visited Kaitangata. The match resulted in a fiercely contested four-all draw, with the home team coming back from a three-goal deficit to even the honours. Match reports were dominated, however, by the behaviour of the local spectators, who threw 'mud and other missiles' at the referee, and of at least one of the local players who allegedly threatened the match official. Dunedin newspapers reported that 'a crowd of irate spectators charged the unfortunate referee', who 'was in imminent peril of being mobbed, the protection of members of the City team and a vice-president of the Kaitangata club alone preventing such a happening'. The referee himself claimed that he was threatened with 'considerable violence'.<sup>78</sup>

Following the match, accusations and counter-accusations, were traded in the Letters section of newspapers. The visiting club called for the match to be replayed, claiming intimidation by the partisan local crowd. The OFA suspended the Kaitangata captain for two seasons, and asked the club to 'show cause' why it should not be suspended.<sup>79</sup> The reporting of this incident, alongside the wider tensions between Kaitangata and the Dunedin-based clubs, points to a perhaps more fundamental difference between the coal miners of Kaitangata and the rest of Otago (including both their rural neighbours and the urban workers of Dunedin).

This reflects the contradictory place that coal-mining, and the men who worked in the industry, faced in late nineteenth and early twentieth century New Zealand. Wright argues 'Kiwis couldn't do without coal – yet for much of the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many despised and even feared coal miners'. This was not unique to New Zealand; there was a general sense that coal miners were a breed apart, at least in the ways in which they were perceived by the rest of society. Writing about coal miners in the North East of England, Alan Metcalfe notes 'this perception of difference was important. There is little doubt that miners are perceived by outsiders, to be different'.<sup>80</sup>

Wright advances an intriguing thesis that coal, and coal mining, were ideologically incompatible with New Zealand's self-image, yet at the same time vital to the modern society that it sought to be. He argues that New Zealanders aimed to create a 'better Britain', free of the smoke, dirt and social problems associated with industrial Britain, of which coal was very much a part. Yet, the trappings of the new urban modernity that would set the new Colony apart - street lighting, tramways, and warm, cosy housing - relied on power, which could only be delivered by coal. Even agriculture, which remained the backbone of the nation's economy, relied on coal to power the freezing works that enabled lamb to be exported to Britain.<sup>81</sup>

Beyond this possible psychic disconnect between miners and other New Zealanders, there were other concrete differences. As has already been discussed, coal miners were predominantly overseas-born and the migrant culture of coal-mining towns set them apart. Physical isolation, and a relative lack of interaction between miners and the rest of society, was also ever-present. There was also the nature of the work involved in extracting coal itself; dangerous, hard, physical labour that required a certain kind of character.

Even the way that the miners spoke set them apart. Wright argues 'their lifestyles jarred with the values professed by the wealthier. Their vocabulary differed. They swore. Everybody knew the words, but coal miners spoke them with free abandon.' This might go some way to explaining the frequency with which Kaitangata soccer players were sent off for 'foul language'. The tensions that could arise from this were illustrated when a rugby union-playing miner from Hikurangi in Northland was sent off for swearing at a referee. The local Rugby Union declared that 'even if the bad language were used in the mines it would not be tolerated on the football grounds, and if it continued the union would not allow games to be played at Hikurangi'. Angered by this decision, the Hikurangi Miners' Union recommended local people not to patronize Whangarei tradespeople till an apology was forthcoming from the Rugby Union'.<sup>82</sup>

More than anything else, however, it was the politics of the miners that set them apart from the rest of Colonial society. The class-consciousness of the miners, as well as the strong bonds of solidarity amongst them, put them at the forefront of industrial struggles in New Zealand. New Zealand was a relatively conservative

society, and the strongly socialist views of the miners were the source of fear and suspicion. Richardson, the foremost scholar of New Zealand mining unionism summed up these perceptions by noting that, 'isolated by geography, occupation and nationality, the miners were depicted – and not by anxious conservatives – as industrial bogeymen about to descend from their mist-shrouded, windswept pit fortresses to take control of the labour movement for their own revolutionary purposes.'<sup>83</sup>

Whilst the politics of the miners may have cast them aside from New Zealanders in general, they were particularly divergent from their rural neighbours. Erik Olsen has claimed that 'it has long been known that farmers throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand were opposed ... to trade unionism'. Farmers and farm labourers were used as strike breakers – most notoriously during the Great Strike of 1913 (which saw wharf labourers and coal miners united in industrial action) when mounted Special Constables, known as 'Massey's Cossacks', were deployed to violently break the strike.<sup>84</sup>

Even compared to Dunedin, Kaitangata's politics were considered dangerously radical. Although though both soccer (particularly through the transport and maritime industries, and the country's Technical high schools) and rugby league in New Zealand had strong working-class associations<sup>85</sup>, it seems that the politics of the coal-miners were regarded as beyond the pale.

Combined together, these factors all served to create a perception of coal-miners as bogeymen of New Zealand society. Whilst the differences may have been exaggerated, the impact of these perceptions was very real. Given the way that miners were perceived, it was perhaps not surprising that one letter-writer to a Dunedin newspaper in the wake of the contentious 1909 Kaitangata verses City match chose to explain the conduct of the referee by stating that 'when one finds burly miners threatening then one has to use discretion.'<sup>86</sup>

Whatever the reason for the events of 1909, the Kaitangata players certainly felt affronted and withdrew from the Dunedin competition. In its place they resolved to establish their own competition within the town, which was divided into four residential districts in order to establish local teams – with the competition won by the Mt Zion team. Whilst the standard of the town's players remained high, illustrated by Kaitangata easily defeating the visiting Southland provincial representative team, the local competition did not prove sustainable. Just one year later the club performed a humiliating u-turn and reapplied to join the Dunedin competition.<sup>87</sup>

Conclusion: On The Eternal Periphery – Too Small / Too Far

Kaitangata's failed bid to establish its own competition in 1910 revealed a further consideration. It was simply too small a town to maintain sporting self-sufficiency (especially when its resources were spread over a number of different codes). Moreover, unlike other coal communities in most parts of the world, Kaitangata was not part of a wider mining region with many neighbouring mining communities. Instead it was a solitary outpost in an otherwise predominantly agricultural setting, and was simply too isolated from other kindred coal towns.<sup>88</sup>

Football in Kaitangata thus reflected the town's relationship with the rest of the province. Its position on the 'industrial frontier' meant that its residents were isolated by distance from their coal-mining brethren, and condemned the town to exist in a space of dual isolation. Its choice of sporting codes, embracing soccer and rugby league, just as in its socialist politics and trade unionism, reflected Kaitangata's cultural distance from its rural neighbours. Yet the town's sporting relationship with Dunedin just as starkly highlighted its differences from the provincial metropole, and the status of its residents as outsiders.

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Bamford, 'Black Diamond City', (B.A. (Hons.) dissertation, University of Otago, 1982), 81.

<sup>2</sup> Colin Howell and Daryl Leeworthy, 'Borderlands', in S. W. Pope and John Nauright (eds), *Routledge Companion to Sports History* (Abingdon; Routledge, 2010), 72-3.

<sup>3</sup> See for example 'New Zealand town with 'too many jobs' and houses is looking for new residents' BBC (online)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/36660186/new-zealand-town-with-too-many-jobs-and-houses-is-looking-for-new-residents> ; 'Kaitangata zaprasza: 1000 wolnych miejsc pracy', Rzeczpospolita (online)

<http://www.rp.pl/Spoleczenstwo/160629064-Kaitangata-zaprasza-1000-wolnych-miejsc-pracy.html> .

<sup>4</sup> NB: New Zealand population figures for this period excluded the indigenous Maori population. New Zealand Official Yearbook 1921-22, [Online] [https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New\\_Zealand\\_Official\\_Yearbooks/1921-22/NZOYB\\_1921-22.html](https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/1921-22/NZOYB_1921-22.html) ; Cyclopedia Company Limited, *The Cyclopedia Of New Zealand [Otago & Southland Provincial Districts]* (Christchurch: Cyclopedia Company Limited, 1905), p. 731-735.

<sup>5</sup> Brian Davis and Edward Dollimore, 'Kaitangata', in Alexander McLintock (ed.), *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1966); Len Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community: The United Mineworkers of New Zealand, 1880-1960* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995), 227; Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives [New Zealand], 1901, Session I, C-3A, 25-29; Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives [New Zealand], 1921, Session I-II, C-2, 40.

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- <sup>6</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 2; Matthew Wright, *Coal: The Rise and Fall of King Coal in New Zealand* [ebook] (Auckland; David Bateman, 2014), chapter 5.
- <sup>7</sup> Wright, *Coal* [ebook], chapter 5; Alan Sherwood and Jock Phillips, 'Coal and coal mining - Mining community', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand (online) <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/coal-and-coal-mining/page-8>
- <sup>8</sup> Wright, *Coal* [ebook], chapter 3.
- <sup>9</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 27; Census and Statistical Office of the Dominion of New Zealand, *Municipal Handbook of the Dominion of New Zealand*, (Wellington, Government Printer, 1924), 382-4.
- <sup>10</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 28.
- <sup>11</sup> *Clutha Leader*, 30 March 1877, 5; 6 April 1877, 5; 27 April 1877, 6; *Bruce Herald*, 28 August 1877, 6.
- <sup>12</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Auckland: Allen & Unwin, 1986); Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1987); John Nauright, 'Myth and Reality: Reflections on Rugby and New Zealand History', *Sporting Traditions*, 6, no 2 (1990), 219-30.
- <sup>13</sup> For examples of these myths see, Greg Ryan, 'The End of an Aura: All Black Rugby and Rural Nostalgia', in Greg Ryan (ed.), *Tacking Rugby Myths: Rugby and New Zealand Society 1854-2004* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2005), 151-8.
- <sup>14</sup> Phillips, *A Man's Country*, 10.
- <sup>15</sup> Greg Ryan, 'Rural Myth and Urban Actuality: The Anatomy of All Black and New Zealand Rugby 1884-1938', in Greg Ryan (ed.), *Tacking Rugby Myths: Rugby and New Zealand Society 1854-2004* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2005), 33-54; Michael Pearson, 'Heads in the Sand: the 1956 Springbok Tour of New Zealand in Perspective', in Richard Cashman and Michael McKernan (eds) *Sport in History* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1979), 281; James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin, 2000), 381-8; Sean O'Hagan, *The Pride of the Southern Rebels: The History of Otago Rugby* (Dunedin: Pilgrims South Press, 1981), 167-9.
- <sup>16</sup> Ryan, 'Rural Myth and Urban Actuality', 41-4.
- <sup>17</sup> Ken Jones, *The Coal Boys: A Century of Rugby at Kaitangata* (Kaitangata, The Club, 1977), 7-19; *Clutha Leader*, 14 April 1899, 4; *Otago Witness*, 19 April 1894, 32; *Evening Star*, 17 March 1896, 4; *Bruce Herald*, 17 April 1903, 5; 5 June 1911, 5; *Otago Rugby Football Union Annual 1926*, Dunedin, 1926.
- <sup>18</sup> *Otago Witness*, 25 July 1889, 27; *Clutha Leader*, 30 August 1889, p. 6.
- <sup>19</sup> *Otago Witness*, 5 September 1889, 1; 26 June 1890, 19; 4 September 1890, 31; 2 April 1891, 17; *Otago Daily Times*, 23 September 1889, 3; 22 July 1890, 4; 27 May 1891, 4; 29 June 1891, 3; 27 July 1891, 3; 24 August 1891, 3; *Evening Star*, 27 May 1890, 4; *Clutha Leader*, 4 September 1891, 6.
- <sup>20</sup> *Otago Witness*, 18 August 1892, 21; *Evening Star*, 6 July 1896, 1; 23 April 1897, 1; 12 April 1898, 2; *Otago Daily Times*, 21 March 1894, 4; 22 July 1890, 4; *Bruce Herald*, 14 April 1893, 3; 10 March 1896, 2; 16 March 1897, 3; 28 May 1897, 1; *Clutha Leader*, 30 March 1894, 5; 10 April 1896, 5; 29 May 1896, 5; 29 April 1898, 5.
- <sup>21</sup> *Evening Star*, 2 May 1900, 6; *Clutha Leader*, 21 September 1921, 5.

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- <sup>22</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 3 April 1903, 5; *Otago Witness*, 29 April 1903, 56; 19 August 1903, 58; *Otago Daily Times*, 24 September 1923, 4.
- <sup>23</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 23 April 1901, 5; 7 May 1901, 5; 4 July 1905, 5; *Evening Star*, 11 August 1913, 5; *Clutha Leader*, 27 June 1911, 5; 23 May 1919, 3; *Otago Daily Times*, 13 April 1921, 8; 16 May 1921, 7; 1 May 1922, 8; 10 May 1923, 4; 1 May 1924, 4.
- <sup>24</sup> Kaitangata Borough Council, *Kaitangata Borough Council Jubilee 1937* (Balclutha: The Council, 1937), 13; *Evening Star*, 23 September 1889, 2.
- <sup>25</sup> *Evening Star*, 23 September 1889, 2; *Clutha Leader*, 31 July 1891, 5; 19 August 1892, 5; Jones, *The Coal Boys*, 12-3.
- <sup>26</sup> *Clutha Leader*, 2 September 1902, 3; *Bruce Herald*, 19 September 1905, 5; *Bruce Herald*, 13 April 1908, 7; *Otago Daily Times*, 10 May 1921, 2; 3 August 1921, 8.
- <sup>27</sup> *Clutha Leader*, 16 April 1912, 6; 1 April 1913, 3; 4 July 1913, 5; *Bruce Herald*, 23 May 1912, 5; *Evening Post*, 30 May 1913, 4.
- <sup>28</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 4 April 1905, 5; *Otago Witness*, 27 September 1905, 57.
- <sup>29</sup> *Dominion*, 2 May 1914, 12; *Otago Daily Times*, 12 September 2013.
- <sup>30</sup> Nick Guoth, 'Loss of Identity: New Zealand Soccer, its Foundations and its Legacies', *Soccer and Society*, 7, nos. 2-3 (2006), 187-207.
- <sup>31</sup> *Southland Football Association Souvenir Handbook, Golden Jubilee, 1903-1953* (Invercargill: The Association, 1953), 9-11; *Auckland Star*, 7 September 1908, 3.
- <sup>32</sup> *Otago Witness*, 17 August 1894, 32; 26 March 1902, 26; *Dominion*, 11 April 1908, 9; 21 June 1916, 6; *Press*, 3 October 1912, 9; *Grey River Argus*, 8 August 1914, 7.
- <sup>33</sup> Alfred Flett, 'Soccer', in A. McLintock (ed.) *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1966); *Evening Post*, 8 June 1922, 8; 26 April 1923, 12; Norman Crawshaw, *From Clouds to Sea: 100 Years of Coal from Millerton and Stockton* (Westport: The Author, 1998) 132-5; Norman Crawshaw, *Stories from the Plateau* (Westport: The Author, 1999), 1-4.
- <sup>34</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 May 1913, 9; *Northern Advocate*, 11 March 1914, 7.
- <sup>35</sup> South Auckland was the name by which the Waikato region was generally referred until the 1920s.
- <sup>36</sup> The new mines had opened during the First World War, and by 1921 employed 137 (Rotowaro), 187 (Pukemiro) and 106 (Glen Massey) men respectively, to complement the 331 miners at the Huntly mine. Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1921 Session I-II, C-02, 40; Richardson, *Coal, Class and Community*, 92-3; *Waikato Argus*, 4 July 1910, 2; *Evening Post*, 6 June 1921, 3; *New Zealand Truth*, 17 March 1923, 9.
- <sup>37</sup> The mines were Hikurangi, Huntly, Rotowaru, Pukemiro, Glen Massey, Millerton, Denniston, Mangatini [Stockton], Dunollie and Rewanui [Runanga], Blackball, Kaitangata (including Castle Hill, Mount Zion and Taratu) and Nightcaps. With the exception of Nightcaps, all of these towns fielded association football teams in the 1920s (Nightcaps had fielded successful teams in the 1900s, but the game died in the town after its exclusion from the Invercargill-based Southland Football Association). Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1921 Session I-II, C-02, 40.
- <sup>38</sup> Wright, *Coal* [ebook], chapter 6.
- <sup>39</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class and Community*, 76; *Otago Daily Times*, 7 April 1927, 16.

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- <sup>40</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 14 October 1926, 3; 19 March 1927; 7 April 1927, 3; 26 April 1927, 3; *Otago Daily Times*, 3 May 1927, 10; 10 May 1927, 13; Otago Rugby Football League minute book, 20 June 1927; City Rugby League Club minute book, 22 March 1928; Alan Blackburn, 'A dying ember: an historical geography of Kaitangata for the period up to 1927', (M.A. thesis, University of Otago, 1969), 144-6.
- <sup>41</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 3 May 1927, 10; 9 August 1927, 7; 9 August 1927, 7; 17 May 1928, 4; *Star Sports Special*, 21 April 1928, p. 1; *Star Sports Special*, 26 April 1930, 6; *Evening Post*, 7 October 1933, 24.
- <sup>42</sup> Charles Little, 'More Green than Red: Sectarianism and Rugby League in Otago, 1924-34', *Sporting Traditions* 21, No. 1 (2004), 33-51.
- <sup>43</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 29 September 1924, 5; 21 August 1924, 4; *Bruce Herald*, 24 August 1924, 3; 29 September 1924, 3; Otago Rugby Football League minute book, 22 September 1924.
- <sup>44</sup> *Star Sports Special*, 26 August 1929, 1; 6 September 1930, 2; *Otago Daily Times*, 6 March 1935, 2.
- <sup>45</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 21 August 1924, 4; 1 October 1924, 1; 3 October 1924, 4; 16 October 1924, 13; Otago Rugby Football League Minute Book, 7 October 1924.
- <sup>46</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 2 September 1926, 3; 6 September 1926, 3; 9 September 1926, 3; 13 September 1926, 3; 27 September 1926, 3; 30 September 1926, 3; 28 March 1927, 3; Otago Rugby Football League Minute Book, 30 August 1926; *Otago Rugby Football League. Annual Report 1926*.
- <sup>47</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 8 March 1926, 3; 11 March 1926, 3.
- <sup>48</sup> For an understanding of rugby league on the West Coast see the chapter entitled 'Coasters' in Geoffrey Moorhouse, *At The George: And Other Essays on Rugby League* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989), 137-44; and Dave Hadfield, 'Once Weren't Warriors', in Dave Hadfield (ed.) *XIII Worlds: Pursuing Rugby League Around the Globe* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1996), 101-7.
- <sup>49</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 2; Bamford, 'Black Diamond City', ii.
- <sup>50</sup> 1921 Census of New Zealand, 55.
- <sup>51</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 27-8.
- <sup>52</sup> Almost all newspaper reports relating the club refer to the players only by their surnames, which precludes any detailed biographical research.
- <sup>53</sup> *Clutha Leader*, 11 March 1892, 5; *Bruce Herald*, 28 May 1897, 1; 2 February 1900, 3; Kaitangata Borough Council, *Kaitangata Borough Council Jubilee 1937*, 13.
- <sup>54</sup> Pakeha New Zealanders of this (and later) periods commonly referred to Britain as 'Home'. *Otago Witness*, 26 March 1902, 51; *Grey River Argus*, 20 August 1914, 3; *Press*, 3 March 1923, 6; *Evening Post*, 26 September 1923, 3.
- <sup>55</sup> The Southland FA history also highlighted that many of the founding members of the Nightcaps club hailed from the 'Old Country'. Southland Football Association Souvenir Handbook, 9-11; John Thomson, *Pasture, Coal Seam and Settlement: a centennial history of Nightcaps and District 1880-1980* (Nightcaps: Nightcaps and District Centennial Committee, 1979), 149-50.
- <sup>56</sup> Crawshaw, *Stories from the Plateau*, p. 1; Crawshaw, *From Clouds to Sea*, p. 132.
- <sup>57</sup> Philip Mosely, *Soccer in New South Wales, 1880-1980* (Bannockburn: Sports and Editorial Services Australia, 2014), 18-34, 85; Andrew Reeves, *Up from the Underworld: Coalminers and Community in Wonthaggi 1909-1968* (Clayton:



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Monash University Publishing, 2011), 49-50, cited in Ian Syson, 'Soccer in Australia: a 136-Year Roller Coaster Ride', Victoria University [online] <http://www.staff.vu.edu.au/syson/soccer2011.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Little, 'The Forgotten Game? A Reassessment of the Place of Soccer within New Zealand Society, Sport and Historiography'. *Soccer and Society* 3, No.1 (2002), 38-50.

<sup>59</sup> The data covers the period from 1893 until June 2014.

<sup>60</sup> William Keane "'Ex-Pats" and "Poofters" Rebuild the Nation: 1982, Kiwi Culture and the All Whites on the Road to Spain', in Brad Patterson (ed.), *Sport, Culture & Society in New Zealand* (Wellington: Stout Research Centre, 1999) 50-4; Dylan Cleaver and Harkanwal Singh 'Where Every All Black was Born', New Zealand Herald [online]. [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=4&objectid=11278276](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=11278276) (accessed 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016).

<sup>61</sup> Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland, 1800-1945* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 80.

<sup>62</sup> Howell and Leeworthy, 'Borderlands', 70-73.

<sup>63</sup> For the links between coal mining and rugby league in Britain see, Tony Collins, *Rugby League in Twentieth Century Britain* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2006), 151-154

<sup>64</sup> *Evening Star*, 26 May 1908, 8; *Clutha Leader*, 29 May 1908, 5.

<sup>65</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 19 March 1925, 3; *Star Sports Special*, 6 September 1924; 16 May 1925, 1.

<sup>66</sup> Rob Hess, 'A Football Federation? The Australasian Football Council and the Jubilee Carnival of Australian Rules Football', in Richard Cashman, John O'Hara and Andrew Honey (eds), *Sport, Federation, Nation* (Sydney: Walla Walla Press, 2001), 97-117.

<sup>67</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 27 May 1903, 5; 19 July 1904, 5; *Otago Witness*, 8 June 1904, 58; Kaitangata Borough Council, *Kaitangata Borough Council Jubilee 1937*, 15; Phillips, *A Man's Country*, 88-9; Bamford, 'Black Diamond City', 104-5.

<sup>68</sup> *Otago Witness*, 1 June 1904, 58.

<sup>69</sup> For Example, a 1930 rugby league match between Kaitangata and Christian Brothers 'A' had to be postponed because an extra shift had to be worked in the mine and the players were unable to get time off to travel to Dunedin. *Evening Star*, 12 April 1898, 2; *Otago Daily Times*, 11 August 1930, 13; Bamford, 'Black Diamond City', 131-2; *Star Sports Special*, 26 April 1930, 6.

<sup>70</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 8 July 1930, 7.

<sup>71</sup> *Evening Star*, 12 April 1898, 2; 2 September 1912, 10; *Otago Daily Times*, 6 July 1905, 5; *Clutha Leader*, 17 March 1908, 5; *New Zealand Herald*, 14 July 1924, 10.

<sup>72</sup> *Star Sports Special*, 9 May 1931, 8.

<sup>73</sup> *Otautau Standard and Wallace County Chronicle*, 23 April 1912, 5; 6 August 1912, 5.

<sup>74</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 5 July 1904, 5.

<sup>75</sup> *Otago Witness*, 8 June 1904, 58; *Evening Star*, 29 June 1904, 3; *Otago Daily Times*, 3 September 1914, 8.

<sup>76</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 16 June 1903, 4; *Otago Witness*, 8 June 1904, 58; 1 August 1906, 62; *Otago Daily Times*, 7 September 1911, 10.

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<sup>77</sup> *Southland Times*, 15 June 1912, 10.

<sup>78</sup> *Evening Star*, 2 August 1909, 3; 3 August 1909, 2; *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909, 61.

<sup>79</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 2 August 1909, 6; 9 August 1909, 8; 10 August 1909, 10.

<sup>80</sup> Wright, *Coal* [online], chapter 5; Alan Metcalfe, *Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community: The Social Economy of Leisure in North-East England, 1820-1914* (London: Routledge, 2006), 1.

<sup>81</sup> Wright, *Coal* [online], *passim*.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, *Coal* [online], chapter 6; *Evening Post*, 5 June 1928, 11.

<sup>83</sup> Richardson, *Coal, Class & Community*, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Erik Olsen, 'What if the Strikers at Waihi had Triumphed', in Stephen Levine (ed.) *New Zealand as it Might Have Been* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006), 100.

<sup>85</sup> Little, 'The Forgotten Game', 44-5; Charles Little, 'Rugby League Football, New Zealand', in John Nauright and Charles Parrish (eds), *Sports Around the World: History Culture and Practice*, (ABC-Clio: Santa Barbara, 2012), 443-444.

<sup>86</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 9 August 1909, 8.

<sup>87</sup> *Southland Times*, 20 September 1910, 3; *Clutha Leader*, 18 October 1910, 6; *Clutha Leader*, 7 March 1911, 5.

<sup>88</sup> The nearest large coalfield to Kaitangata was Nightcaps in Southland, but that was a distance of 170 kilometres away (and without direct rail or road links), too far to be a regular source of competition. The soccer teams of these two towns engaged in a series of reciprocal Easter holiday tours from 1903 until 1920, but these were always one-off matches with no more than one match played each season. Not all of New Zealand's mining communities faced these problems – in Waikato and on the West Coast, where there were a greater concentration of coal seams and mines, successful local soccer associations were formed. For Kaitangata, however, geography dictated that it would forever live on the periphery of Otago society. *Otago Witness*, 15 July 1903, 61; *Clutha Leader*, 10 April 1914, 3; 20 March 1920, 3.